



COVER STORY

A Glimpse at Tomorrow

Many of our readers will be among the first Marines to use a new generation of weapons and equipment designed to enhance the Corps' mission in the 21st century 16

On the Cover

A Marine looks through the site of a Javelin fire-and-forget, medium anti-armor weapon. The system is one of many new weapons designed for increased lethality and decreased signature.

Photo by Rex Campbell courtesy of TI/Martin Javelin

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Marines
MAGAZINE
Online

<http://www.usmc.mil/marines/default.htm>

I understand that the Marine Corps may not want to spend extra money on those Marines who plan to exit the Marine Corps at their EAS, but is it fair to offer the opportunity to purchase the G.I. Bill to Marines who are being involuntarily separated? To me, if the Marine Corps is going to let Marines who have gotten into trouble have this opportunity, we should let those Marines who have completed a successful tour have the same option.

Sgt. Michael J. Mellons, 8th Engineer Support Battalion, 2nd Force Service Support Group

Your question addressed the issue of enrolling in the MGIB later in your enlistment than at initial entry. Federal law prohibits enrollment other than at initial entry, and DoD has determined that the initial entry period will be the initial 14 days of active duty. The DD-2236 form, which all active duty servicemembers are required to complete, states that "I do not desire to enroll in the MGIB. I understand that I will not be able to enroll at a later date." However, the Commandant of the Marine Corps supports the opportunity to enroll in the MGIB at each reenlistment. On Oct. 2, 1995, we raised the subject with Mr. Montgomery, House of Representatives, and with the other services. Unfortunately, the outcome was to maintain the

current federal policy on enrollment during the initial enlistment process only. Although the Marine Corps would prefer the change in policy, there are valid reasons for maintaining the current policy.

One reason our proposed policy was not accepted is that the MGIB program offered by the military services is very successful. Each service maintains an enrollment rate in the 90th percentile. The Marine Corps has a 97 percent enrollment rate. The very success of the program limits the desire to change the policy that supports it.

Another reason for not changing the policy is supported by the enrollment process. Servicemembers are briefed on the MGIB twice during the first 14 days of active duty. During this period, servicemembers are automatically enrolled unless they specifically choose to decline the program. Upon declination, the servicemember is counseled on a one-on-one basis about his or her decision.

The other services also have concerns that policy changes will diminish the success of the MGIB program. For example, if a servicemember knows he or she will have another opportunity to enroll in the program, they may choose to delay their enrollment until a later date. As years pass, the servicemember may then have a family or other financial obligations and may not

be able to afford the \$1,200 contribution. Thus, servicemembers who delay enrollment are less likely to enroll in the program at a later date, forfeiting the invaluable benefits offered.

You mentioned that the Marine Corps may not want to spend extra money for Marines that are exiting the Marine Corps. The MGIB is not funded by the Marine Corps. Congress appropriates the funds to the Department of Veterans Affairs, so allowing Marines to enroll at a later date would have no financial impact on the Marine Corps whatsoever.

Marines who are separated involuntarily are given the opportunity to enroll in MGIB under special enrollment opportunity offered by federal law. You said in your e-mail that MGIB should not be offered to those who have gotten into trouble. To qualify for special enrollment a Marine must receive an honorable discharge; therefore, it is not available to those Marines that served in any capacity other than honorably.

As opportunities arise, the Marine Corps will continue to encourage legislators and the other services to review their position on this policy change. Thank you for writing. Your interest and commitment to the Marine Corps is appreciated.

Col. Kenneth W. Hillman, Director, Marine Corps Human Resources Division

Marines

Commandant of the Marine Corps

Gen. Charles C. Krulak

Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps

Sgt. Maj. Lewis G. Lee

Managing Editor

Fred Carr Jr.

Editor

Staff Sgt. E. C. Tausch

Assistant Editor

Sgt. Kurt M. Sutton

Field Editor

Maj. Tim Hoyle

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Sgt. Charles F. Wolf



MCI goes online

The Marine Corps Institute announced June 19 that its Internet homepage is operational. The address is "www.mci.hqi.usmc.mil."

The MCI site will provide users with the latest information and developments relating to MCI distance learning products, student enrollment, and student administration.

Visitors to the site are reminded that the homepage is a work in progress and that information and services will continue to be added as they are available. Currently, the page provides links to: Contacting MCI, Announcements and Hotlines, Annual Course Listing, Procedures Manuals, File Library, History of the Institute, and Frequently Asked Questions. —*Marine Corps Institute*

Lab changes name

Now firmly on its feet as the focal point of developing new ideas and technologies for Marine Corps operations in the 21st century, the Commandant's Warfighting Laboratory will, according to Gen. Charles C. Krulak, "assume its rightful place among the permanent institutions of our Corps."

With that pronouncement, the 31st commandant directed the Quantico, Va.-based command to be immediately renamed the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory. "I lent the commandant's name to give the lab emphasis, to get it off the ground," he said. "Now it's time for the laboratory to stand apart from the person of the commandant ..."

Established in November 1995, the laboratory continues the Marine Corps' front-line role in military innovations which have included: close-air support, amphibious vehicles, vertical assault, vertical/short take-off and landing



The MCI website will provide users with the latest information and developments relating to MCI distance learning products, student enrollment, and student administration.

Sgt. Kurt M. Sutton



Lt. Col Stephen Dodd, commanding officer, 1st Maintenance Bn., and Chief Warrant Officer-4 Debra Roberts, battalion maintenance management officer, join Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton during the Secretary of Defense Maintenance Awards program in Washington.

aircraft, tilt-rotor aircraft, less-than-lethal technologies, and unmanned aerial vehicles. All of these, said the commandant, allow the Marine Corps, as the nation's force in readiness, to be ready to fight anywhere at anytime.

The rule of the day in military operations is "adapt or die," he said. "This is exactly the reason we called for the establishment of the Commandant's Warfighting Laboratory. It gives us the means to adapt."

The recent conclusion of

"Hunter Warrior," the first in a three-part series of advanced warfighting experiments conducted by the laboratory, illustrates what the commandant calls "the innovative spirit resident in every Marine." During the experiment, many ideas developed by Marines were put to the test in the deserts of Southern California, including a hybrid variant of the unmanned aerial vehicle and a computer bank powered by solar/wind-charged batteries.

"While the warfighting

laboratory is the conduit for operational reform in the Corps, the fleet Marine is the centerpiece for testing and implementing reforms," Krulak stated. "A warfighting organization cannot institutionalize innovation without the support and the input of the warfighters. Therefore, the most important innovating mechanism in the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory is the individual Marine."

"The Marine Corps needs everyone's ideas on innovation," the commandant continued. "The laboratory needs them, I need them. As it has always been, the fleet Marine walks the point in the innovation process. As such, I expect each and every Marine to embrace and contribute to the experimentation. It's your laboratory."

Marines can submit their ideas by writing to: Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory, 2042 Broadway Street, Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico, VA 22134-5060. —*HQMC Public Affairs*

Maintenance unit honored

The 1997 DoD Maintenance Awards, including the prestigious Phoenix Trophy, were presented June 19 at the Pentagon.

At the top of this year's list of winners was 1st Maintenance Bn., 1st Force Service Support Group, Camp Pendleton, Calif. In addition to winning the Large Category, the battalion was honored with the Phoenix Trophy, signifying the most significant weapon system and equipment maintenance achievements in DoD.

The battalion's streamlined operations and high equipment readiness rate were cited in the award citations. —*HQMC Public Affairs*

Reducing the Impact to Your Pockets

Established programs and new initiatives will ensure independent duty Marines are not short-changed.

By Staff Sgt. Eric C. Tausch
HQMC, Washington

A special Headquarters Marine Corps subcommittee, formed to study the economic impact of independent duty on Marines and their families, has reported its findings. The board concluded that many of the concerns raised by Marines assigned as recruiters, to "A" billets with the recruiting service, or as members of inspector-instructor staffs are already being addressed, either by the Marine Corps or at the Defense Department level.

Despite ongoing improvements to quality of life programs and military compensation, the issue of out-of-pocket expenses for independent duty Marines had become a perennial issue. Last year, it was introduced and formally adopted for discussion at the Sergeants Major Symposium.

Because some of the questions

revolve around entitlements that can only be authorized or adjusted by Congress, and to determine the extent of the economic impact on Marines and their families who are not stationed on or near a military installation, the commandant agreed with a recommendation resulting from the symposium that the

issue merited further study. He directed the Headquarters Marine Corps Quality of Life Working Group to form an Independent Duty Quality of Life Subcommittee to explore the issue in detail.

One of the main concerns voiced was the inability to shop at commissaries and exchanges. The Defense Commissary Agency designs its operations to reduce the cost of grocery items by 25 percent. The effective result, according to one argument, is that

those unable to shop there take a reduction in pay equal to 25 percent of the Marine's grocery bill.

To tackle this issue — not just for Marines, but for any military member stationed away from a DoD installation

Recent Initiatives

REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES. 1997 increase in the standard reimbursable out-of-pocket expenses from \$50 to \$75 per month. Commander can authorize more for legitimate expenses.

SUBSISTANCE. 1997 cost-of-living allowance increase, dropping the threshold to eight percent above the national average.

HOUSING. New variable housing allowance rate determination model slated to take effect in January 1998. Additionally, HQMC is exploring the use of "set aside" housing for Marines assigned to independent duty.

CHILD CARE. HQMC is currently testing subsidized child care programs possibly available to independent duty Marines in the future.



— the Secretary of Defense established a stateside Cost of Living Allowance in 1995 to help compensate for food and other non-housing items in high-cost areas. Initially, COLA was authorized in those locations where the cost of living was nine percent above the national average. The COLA was increased slightly this year when the threshold was dropped to eight percent above the national average. Currently, COLA is authorized in 65 locations around the country.

Civilian housing costs were another area of much discussion. While testifying in March before the House Appropriations Committee, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Lewis G. Lee noted the



Sgt. Lina M. Meyers, assigned to an "A" billet with 9th Marine Corps District, Kansas City, Mo., speaks to a class in support of recruiting in the Midwest. A special subcommittee studied the economic impact of independent duty on Marines and their families and concluded that many of the concerns raised are already being addressed.

A possible solution, according to Evans, is currently being tested at certain Marine Corps installations. Child care providers in the civilian communities undergo training approved by the Human Resources Division and then provide subsidized care only to the children of Marines. "If we have success with this program, we may be able to implement it for Marines on independent duty," explained Evans. "Again, this may be a challenge where there are only two or three Marines in an area, but I don't think it's impossible."

A workable solution for recruiters' out-of-pocket expenses was already implemented earlier this year. To reimburse Marines for expenses such as tolls, parking fees, and other incidentals incurred by their unique duty, the Marine Corps Recruiting Command increased the standard reimbursable expenses from \$50 to \$75 per month. If recruiters spend more than \$75 on legitimate expenses, their commanding officers can authorize additional reimbursement.

The subcommittee could not validate an argument for an additional uniform maintenance allowance. "Some duties have higher maintenance costs than others; Staff NCO Academy instructors, for example," their report stated.

A proposal for a form of "Independent Duty Pay" was also judged invalid from a legal standpoint. "Establishing an entitlement requires changes to Title 37 U.S. Code and would have to be a joint initiative under the Unified Legislation and Budgeting process," the subcommittee's report said.

The bottom line, according to Lee, is that the Corps is doing everything within its power to care for its Marines. He believes actions already taken and initiatives underway will help accomplish that. □

challenge of ensuring adequate housing for independent duty personnel. He said he views improvements to the Basic Allowance for Quarters and Variable Housing Allowance as key to resolving this problem. Along those lines, DoD has slated a new rate determination model to take effect in January 1998.

Meanwhile, the Installations and Logistics Department, HQMC, is exploring the use of "set aside" housing for Marines assigned to independent duty. Already used in some areas where on-base housing is limited or unavailable, set aside involves agreements with local landlords to provide housing at the BAQ/VHA rate and does not require special pay or additional cost to the

government.

Another area being explored for independent duty Marines is an equivalent of on-base child care. Many Marines who currently use on-base child care have up to half of the cost for child care subsidized by funds from the installation's operations and maintenance account.

Mrs. Sandra Evans, Child Development Program Coordinator in HQMC's Human Resources Division, said that it would "be impossible to try to run child care centers for one or two Marines spread out here and there. She also explained that, "It is illegal to provide money directly to Marines to subsidize child care in the civilian sector."



Drum major Gunnery Sgt. Patricia Crimmins leads the Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Field Marching Band.

J. Scott Omsted

she's not on the field leading the band, she's usually behind her desk catching up on paperwork, making phone calls concerning the band's next performance, or counseling her Marines.

A former drill instructor and primary marksmanship instructor coach at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., as well as an Officer Candidates School instructor, Crimmins attributes many of her past duties in helping her with her current position.

"Being a former drill instructor and OCS instructor gave me the high-amount of discipline needed for this task," said the DuBois, Penn., native. "D.I. School is where I learned most of what I know about drill, and having experience in the administration field helps out since I handle the administrative side of things here."

The 15-year veteran's other previous duties include serving as a librarian, with the III Marine Expeditionary Force Band, Okinawa, Japan, and librarian, administrative chief, supply chief, and platoon commander, MCRD Band, Parris Island, S.C. She's also a graduate of the Marine Corps University's Noncommissioned Officer School, Career Course, and Advance Course and holds an Associates Degree in Science from the University of South Carolina.

With all of her accomplishments, Crimmins also attributes her success to her three children: Christine, Michael, and Casey, and her husband, Staff Sgt. Paul Crimmins, the band's supply staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge and trumpet section leader.

"He understands what I go through at work," said Crimmins. "Originally, we both wanted to become drum majors, but when my aspirations got set towards becoming a drum major, it kind of set his career on the back burner for awhile. He understood what the position meant to me and he supported me the whole way through."

Crimmins' next career goal is to become the drum major for the Corps' best-known musical group, "The President's Own" Marine Corps Band. Currently working on her bachelor of science degree in wildlife and forestry management, Crimmins plans on becoming a park ranger or a game commissioner upon her retirement from the Corps. □

A First for Female Marines

Earning the military occupational specialty of drum major is just the latest note on this musician's sheet of achievements.

By Cpl. Jim Goodwin
MCB Quantico, Va.

Women continue to break new ground in the Corps. On Feb. 15, Gunnery Sgt. Patricia Crimmins became the first female Marine to earn the drum major military occupational specialty (MOS 5521).

"Becoming a drum major had been a goal of mine for awhile," said the five-foot eight-inch 33-year-old. "It was Capt. Kirk Troen (then head of Marine Music) who asked me what I planned on doing with my career, and I told him I wasn't sure just yet. That's when he suggested the drum major path."

Set on becoming a drum major, the blond-haired, up-beat, saxophone player set out on her quest to attain one of the most prestigious positions in a military

band. Learning the basics of a drum major's duties and responsibilities while attending the Armed Forces School of Music Intermediate Music Course, Crimmins still needed six months of on-the-job training as a drum major and a letter of recommendation from her band officer before picking up the MOS.

Once she fulfilled both of those requirements, she submitted her package for the lateral move in October 1996 for evaluation. Serving as the band's drum major since her arrival here in July 1996, it wasn't until after she resubmitted her package this year that she received the MOS to make her an official Marine Corps Drum Major.

As the drum major for the Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., Field Marching Band, Crimmins leads the unit during parades and ceremonies. When



A CH-46 from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-164 settles into the water.

In the Air ...

Sailing Phrogs

Why Marine aircrews are landing their helicopters in water.

By Sgt. Ted L. Hansen
Lake Otay, San Diego

The Navy and Marine Corps CH-46 helicopters, also known as Phrogs, are a familiar sight in the skies of Southern California. For 30 years, these medium lift cargo and troop carrying helicopters have been well known for their ability to provide air support to Marines and Sailors. A lesser known fact about the CH-46 is its ability to operate in water.

The term "Phrog" dates back to 1965 at Marine Corps Air Station Quantico, Va., according to John Morgenstern, the CH-46 representative at MCB Quantico, Va., since 1968. Two men were standing out on the flight line as a '46 was making an approach. One remarked that the helicopter looked like

a frog coming out of the water. The other, Fritz Zander, who happened to be an outstanding artist, used his imagination and, a short time later, drew the first pictures of a CH-46 from the front as a frog. The "Ph" spelling was used just to be different.

When conducting amphibious operations, situations may require pilots to land the CH-46 in the water. Although it is primarily designed for flight, the steel-skinned Phrog is also designed to remain buoyant and maneuver in such cases.

To familiarize CH-46 aircrews with the aircraft's water-handling characteristics, they practice water landings. The practice gives CH-46 aircrews confidence to put the aircraft in water in emergency situations, according to Maj. Mike Naylor, operations officer, Marine

Medium Helicopter Squadron-268.

Several maneuvers are required: vertical and running landings, vertical and running takeoffs, water taxiing, and water taxi turns.

According to Maj. Michael W. Manzer, aviation maintenance officer, HMM-268, water landings have a practical application. He recalls an incident when a CH-46, loaded with passengers and cargo, suffered a single-engine failure while at sea.

"The pilot landed the aircraft in the water and taxied several miles to shore," Maj. Manzer said.

The pilot was able to save the passengers, cargo, aircrew, and the aircraft.

On Oct. 16, 1996, a pilot from HMM-166 was flying off shore Oahu, when an engine fire forced him to perform an emergency water landing. The pilot used the water-handling capabilities of the CH-46 to save his crew.

The CH-46 has been referred to as a bird, a plane, and a Phrog. However, its ability to water taxi at five knots will not likely cause it to be referred to as a fish, but it will save lives, equipment, and aircraft. □

In the Air ...

Hornets Ho from It



Return signals the end of squadron's U.N. support.

By Lance Cpl. Art Geahr
MCAS Beaufort, S.C.

Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron-224 returned to Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, S.C. from Aviano Air Base, Italy, June 7, signaling the successful conclusion of the squadron's mission of providing air support during operation "Deliberate Guard," part of the United Nation's peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Families and friends welcomed the Marines home at VMFA(AW)-224's hangar, which has seen F/A-18 Hornet

squadrons from Marine Aircraft Group-31 deploy to Aviano Air Base since July 1993.

The "Bengals," along with VMFA(AW)-533 and VMFA(AW)-332, have routinely rotated overseas in six-month intervals, supporting America's interests abroad.

The squadron left the air station Feb. 16, for its rotation in the six-month deployment cycle to Aviano, a deployment cut short by world events and directions by higher headquarters.

"Because our com-



F/A-18D pilot Capt. Brian Beckwith, is welcomed by his wife, Denise, at Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, S.C. MAG-31 Hornets have deployed to Aviano since 1993.

mandant and the senior leadership of the Marine Corps saw there was no longer a requirement for F/A-18Ds forward-deployed in support of U.N. resolutions, he asked the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff if he could pull the F/A-18Ds out of Italy. The answer was "yes," said Col. James F. Amos, MAG-31 commander.

"It was a real surprise," said Capt. Michael Orr, VMFA(AW)-224's future operations officer. "We had gone over there with the expectation of being there

ome aly



An F/A-18D Hornet from Marine All Weather Fighter Attack Squadron-224 touches down at Aviano Air Base, Italy.

Tech. Sgt. Russ Pollanen

for six months," he said.

"This was our third deployment to Aviano and, as it turns out, it was the final deployment."

Upon arrival in Aviano, the squadron began flying missions almost immediately, Orr said. "That was our mission, our main reason for being there," he said.

In addition to "Deliberate Guard," VMFA(AW)-224 also provided air support for the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit during Operation Silver Wake, the non-combatant evacuation of Americans from Albania.

"While the evacuation was going on, we provided continuous air support throughout the night with the Air Force picking it up during the day," said Orr.

The squadron also participated in



Master Sgt. Joseph M. Juarez



Marines deployed to Aviano Air Base, Italy, lived in "Tent City" (above and left).

training exercises.

"We got to send all of our aircrews to Laage, Germany, to fight the MiG-29 Fulcrum with German pilots," he said. "That was a big highlight for us."

Meanwhile, at the Aviano Air Base, some of the Italian citizens were enthusiastic about the presence of Marine Hornets.

"We had a huge fan club over in Aviano," said Orr. "Some days, on a nice Sunday afternoon for example, there were about 100 to 150 people outside the gates. They had huge American flags and a big poster with our Bengal patch on it, and they would wave them at us when we landed," he said.

"To show our appreciation, we would go outside the gate and visit with them, and we gave a tour to some of the children," he said.

Now that they have returned to the air station, the squadron will turn its attention toward training, Orr said. "There was a lot of training that we couldn't do in Aviano. For example, we couldn't practice air-to-ground bombing. We just didn't have the ranges, or the opportunity. We flew around with live ordnance on every mission, but we weren't actually practicing delivering the ordnance," he said.

Back at "Fightertown," the squadron is already back to business as usual.

"We're planning to certify some aircrews as air combat tactics instructors. We're also planning for an expected influx of new pilots," Orr said. "We're going to be fairly busy doing all of that." □



During the field operation, corpsmen used sterilizing machines to sanitize surgical instruments.

On Land ...

More than a MASH

Navy doctors perform real field surgeries in a medical facility designed to move with the Marine mission.

By Sgt. J. J. Rodriguez
MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Among the trees just outside the Naval hospital, covered by camouflage netting, the tent camp looked like a Marine unit's bivouac area. However, this camp did not house Marines resting before a fight, but Navy surgeons training to save lives.

Sailors from Company C, 2nd Field Medical Battalion, showcased their medical abilities and facilities in the field recently during the seven-day Battalion Surgical Operation 1-97. Two surgeons, over a two-day period, performed 14 actual surgeries, including hernia removals.

The field setup is designed to handle medical situations at the echelon two level — essentially one step above the first-aid level. The higher the echelon, the more in-depth the care, according to Chief Petty Officer Michael Reynolds, chief hospital corpsman. The Naval hospital treats up to echelon five

situations.

The fixture was not designed to be permanent like those found in the Army or Air Force. This six-tent camp is highly mobile in order to meet the demands of the Marine Corps' mission. It can be up and ready to receive patients in 24 hours, Reynolds said.

"We're here to support the Marines when they're putting lead down range," he said. "Anything the hospital can do (at level two echelon), we can do here."

Each tent in the camp housed a section like those found inside a surgical ward. Corpsmen manned a small pharmacy with sufficient medications to meet the operation's mission. They were even capable of mixing "piggy back" intravenous solutions for patients, to implement the contents on an existing IV.

"You will not see us carry what the (hospital) pharmacy has," Reynolds said. "We're looking to meet the mission for combat. We carry the basic antibiotics."

Next to the pharmacy, corpsmen



were busy at work in the Central Sterile Supply Room, sterilizing surgery tools and other equipment. By using two 275-pound sterilizing machines, which run on gas or electricity, they were able to clean and have tools and surgery equipment ready within minutes.

White tape outside the tent warned everyone to keep their distance as a safety precaution. The X-ray machine inside, though powerful enough to produce hospital quality prints, was not potent enough to cause any serious damage.

The film was ready within three minutes, since the tent also carries its



A crowded tent was no obstacle to performing 14 actual surgeries in the field. Navy doctors and corpsmen were able to achieve the same quality in the field as in the nearby Naval hospital.

Sgt. J. J. Rodriguez

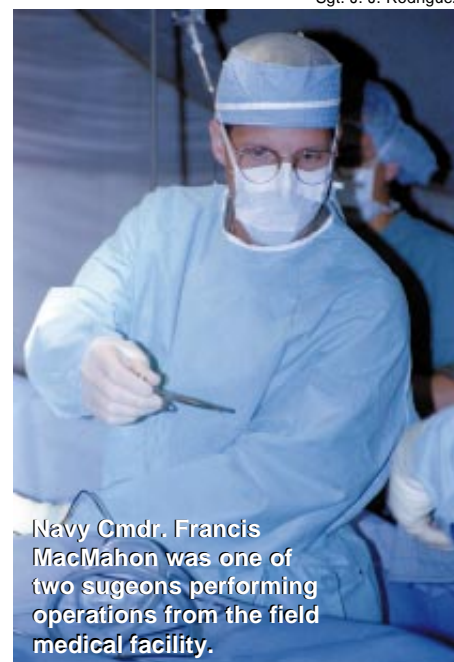
own processor. The processor is slower than the hospital's, and the film comes out a little damp, but the quality is the same and, at times, better, Sarisen said.

Close to the X-ray technician tent, Petty Officer 2nd Class Eddie Leeks, a lab technician, examined tissue through a microscope. The room contained an array of machines to assist in determining the nature of a patient's ailments. Everything is "high-tech," according to Reynolds. The laboratory also contained a refrigeration unit with its own power backup. No other country's service carries anything of the sort in the field.

Next in the medical section line

stood the administration room where patients check in and out. There, corpsmen read the patient's medical record books to determine the nature of their visit. In the front corner of this tent, a Marine also monitored a radio, keeping in constant communication with the rear. He was part of a small detachment of Marines assigned to provide the company communication and transportation support.

In the distance the camp's command service support operations center regulated the surgical and medical operations. In addition to keeping track of each patient and his treatment,



Navy Cmdr. Francis MacMahon was one of two surgeons performing operations from the field medical facility.

CSSOC kept the commander informed of everything that took place within the tent's confines.

All of the previously mentioned tents serve one purpose — to support what goes on at the surgery tent, where the real action took place. Two surgeons, aided by their staff, performed elective surgery on 14 patients.

"They went by the book. Before I knew it, I was walking out," said Staff Sgt. Rodney Mauck, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron-26.

Everything inside was set up as it would be at a hospital surgery room, but on a smaller scale. All the patients, to include Navy Capt. Carl J. Hooton, battalion commander, volunteered to have surgery in the field. They put their trust and their lives in the hands of their fellow servicemembers.

"I'm familiar with the field hospital," said Staff Sgt. James T. Bumgarner, Military Police Co., 2nd Force Service Support Group. "I know it's sanitary. They have to train so they can do their job in combat. Training will teach them how to handle situations (that may arise)."

Training with more people and equipment is what they plan. This field surgical operation will likely expand in the future. The battalion hopes to take it on the road and improve its capability by becoming bigger, better, and faster, Reynolds said. □

No Holds Barred

Mustang Leftwich Trophy recipient served with distinction first as an enlisted Marine on recruiting duty, Marine security guard duty, and in combat.

By **Cpl. Chris Irvine**
MCB Camp Lejeune, N.C.

Twenty-two years after stepping on the yellow foot prints at Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., Capt. Jeffrey J. Kenney received the Leftwich Award for leadership excellence from Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Charles C. Krulak.

It had been a long trip for Kenney, Weapons Company commander, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment. His career is based on solid leadership and is reflective of another great Marine for whom the award is named.

Lieutenant Col. William G. Leftwich, Jr.'s entire Marine career was one of leadership by example. He served in a variety of distinguished billets and two tours in Vietnam. It was late in his second tour that Leftwich's unit received an emergency extract request from a reconnaissance team that was being systematically hunted by a large enemy force.

The extract helicopter found and successfully extracted the reconnaissance team. While maneuvering to evade the enemy, the helicopter smashed into the side of a fog-shrouded mountain, killing all on board.

While his death was tragic, Leftwich left a legacy of accomplishment through leadership. The Leftwich Award was created to single out and highlight outstanding captains who have consistently shown superior leadership skills.

"Every year, battalion commanders come together and, if they feel that one of their captains is deserving in their high leadership skills, they'll write a nomination for the award," Kenney said.

After graduating as platoon honor man Kenney was sent to Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms, Calif., to work as an intelligence assistant. He was later selected for

Marine Security Guard duty in August of 1976. During this tour, he was meritoriously promoted to lance corporal.

Kenney spent 13 months at the American Embassy in Tehran, Iran, just before the embassy was overrun. He also served for 17 months at the U.S. Consulate in Frankfurt, Germany, before returning to the United States. Kenney was meritoriously promoted to corporal and sergeant. During the rest of his

Cpl. Chris Irvine



Capt. Jeffrey J. Kenney received the Leftwich Award for leadership.

enlisted career, he served as platoon commander for a Surveillance and Target Acquisition Platoon, was a member of 1st Reconnaissance Bn., and served on recruiting duty, earning Recruiter of the Year distinction in 1983. He was meritoriously promoted to gunnery sergeant for his outstanding achievements as a recruiter.

It was at this point Kenney decided to become an officer. Accepted into the Marine Corps Enlisted Commissioning Education Program in 1984, he studied history at the University of Colorado,

and attained his bachelor's degree in May 1987.

His leadership skills were keenly displayed once again when, at the Infantry Officers Course, he received the Wheeler Award for superior leadership.

Kenney's first assignment as an officer was with 3rd Bn., 8th Marines, where he served as a rifle platoon commander, weapons platoon commander, and company executive officer. While assigned to 3/8, he participated in Operation Sharp Edge, evacuating U.S. citizens from Monrovia, Liberia.

After attending the Amphibious Warfare School, he reported to 2nd Bn, 2nd Marines as Golf Company commander.

Golf Co. then deployed to Monrovia to participate in Operation Assured Response -- once again to evacuate American citizens and protect the American Embassy. It was here that Kenney faced one of his greatest leadership challenges.

"We were attacked three different times and were under fire every day that we were there. I remember that at the same time we were under attack by a group of rebels, we had a very large group of civilians trying to get in through the rear gate to escape the fighting. At that very same moment, we had unidentified boats coming from the sea with crew served weapons aboard. It got wild there for a moment," Kenney said.

The boats turned out to be friendly and Kenney returned with all of his Marines. Three of his men suffered minor injuries.

Kenney said he's not the only captain in the Corps qualified for the Leftwich Award.

"There are captains in almost every battalion who could have won this award. There are some truly outstanding officers out there ... who I think deserve this award more than me," he said.

Kenney believes that trusting Marines around him is what led him to winning the Leftwich Award.

"I think officers who believe they have all the answers all of the time are poor leaders. If you surround yourself with people who are knowledgeable and trust their judgment, I don't think you can go wrong," Kenney said. □

Navy's Newest Amphib a Tribute to Marines

Battle of Iwo Jima veterans gathered at their monument in Washington for the naming of the *USS Iwo Jima*.

Veterans of the Battle of Iwo Jima who attended the Sunset Parade at the Marine Corps War Memorial June 10 felt a wave of pride swell through them even before the pageantry began. In a pre-parade ceremony, Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton announced that the Navy's newest amphibious warship will be named *USS Iwo Jima* (LHD-7), the seventh ship of the Wasp class.

"It is an honor for me to name our newest amphibious ship after the Battle of Iwo Jima," said the Secretary. "I am proud this great nation will commission *USS Iwo Jima* to honor the enduring legacy of those who fought and dedicated their lives to the United States of America."

The ship will be the second to bear the name. The first, decommissioned in January 1993, was the lead ship of the Iwo Jima class of amphibious assault ships. The principal mission of the new

Wasp-class amphibious assault ship is to enable the Navy/Marine Corps team to accomplish a seamless transition from the sea to a land campaign and conduct prompt, sustained combat operations at sea.

"*USS Iwo Jima*, to be christened at the turn of the century, will possess the most powerful technology and weapons capability available," said Dalton. "Iwo Jima's ultimate strength will be the ability to deter aggression, and her lifeblood will be our Sailors and Marines who man the deckplates ... they will honor the tradition of sacrifice so honorably held by those who fought and died at the battle of Iwo Jima."

U.S. Senator Bob Smith (R-N.H.), a Navy veteran and the parade's reviewing official, said, "This ship, the finest of its kind, will carry on the legacy of those fresh-faced Leathernecks who turned the tide of history 52 years ago."

Wasp-class amphibious

Like the *USS Kearsage* (LHD-3) shown here taking Marines to evacuate non-combatants from Sierra Leone, the *USS Iwo Jima* will take Marines where they need to go to get the job done. The original *Iwo Jima* was decommissioned in 1993.



assault ships are fully capable of amphibious assault, advance force and special purpose operations, as well as non-combatant evacuation and other humanitarian missions. The ships are fully equipped with command, control, communication and intelligence systems for flagship command duty, and have medical facilities — including a 600-bed hospital.

The assault support system aboard a Wasp-class ship coordinates movement of troops, cargo, and vehicles. Monorail trains, moving at speeds up to 600 feet-per-minute, transport cargo and supplies

Cpl. Jerry D. Pierce



U.S. Senator Bob Smith (R-N.H.)

"This ship, the finest of its kind, will carry on the legacy of those fresh-faced Leathernecks who turned the tide of history 52 years ago."

from storage and staging areas throughout the ship to a well deck, which opens to the sea through huge gates in the ship's stern. There, cargo, troops, and vehicles are loaded aboard landing craft for transit to the beach. Air-cushioned landing craft can "fly" out of the dry well deck, or the well deck can be ballasted down for conventional craft to float out on their way to the beach. Simultaneously, helicopters are moved from the hangar deck to the flight deck by two deck-edge elevators and loaded with supplies from three massive cargo elevators.

USS Iwo Jima will be 844 feet long, with a 106-foot beam. Two steam propulsion plants, developing a combined 70,000 horsepower, will drive the 40,500-ton ship to speeds in excess of 22 knots. It is designed to carry nearly 2,000 combat Marines, 1,200 Sailors, a full range of Navy and Marine Corps assault helicopters, AV-8B Harriers, landing craft, and amphibious vehicles. □

Marines from Battalion Landing Team 1/2 fire from a ridge in Sierra de Retin, Spain, during Exercise Linked Seas 97.



Aircraft from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261 (Reinforced) line the helo pad of the USS Ponce off the coast of Sierra De Retin, Spain.



At Sea ...

Practice for Perfection

While a portion of the 22nd MEU(SOC) was evacuating Sierra Leone, the other portion was in Spain training for the next "911" call.

By Staff Sgt. Phil A. Mehringer
22nd MEU(SOC), aboard the *USS Ponce*

On April 15, the secretary of defense ordered elements of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) to begin their six-month deployment two weeks early. Those Marines and Sailors, deployed aboard the *USS Kearsarge*, relieved the 26th MEU(SOC) in Brazzaville, Congo, then proceeded to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where they conducted a non-combatant evacuation operation from May 30 to June 4. More than 2,500 American citizens and third-country nationals were whisked to safety over the course of five days.

Meanwhile, the remaining elements of the 22nd MEU(SOC), which had departed on schedule, were in Sierra de Retin, Spain. There, they refined their skills in non-combatant evacuation operations during Exercise Linked Seas '97.

Twenty small rubber boats wait in the well deck of the *USS Ponce*. Coxswains check over their combat rubber raiding craft, like birds of prey eyeing

their next meal, ensuring packs, weapons, and extra gear are in exactly the right place. Everything must be positioned correctly, waterproofed, and tied down to ensure safe delivery to the beach.

As the ship's well deck begins to flood, Company C, Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 2nd Marines is ready to launch a pre-dawn attack against an enemy force in the training area of Sierra de Retin, Spain.

Less than three weeks after leaving Camp Lejeune, the Marines and Sailors of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary unit (Special Operations Capable) are conducting multinational operations on foreign shores in the Mediterranean. Exercise Linked Seas '97 placed the MEU Marines with 11 NATO countries in a joint and combined operational arena.

Three groups of raiding craft pounded through the heavy surf as two, 35-horsepower engines propelled them through the waves, speeding them closer to the beach. Operating under a blanket of darkness, they have the tactical advantage over the beach's defenders.

Within the next 48 hours, U.S.

Marines played an integral part in the exercise, alongside their Spanish counterparts. As Co. C moved forward to disable a coastal defense site, Co. B moved inland via amphibious assault vehicles to provide security for citizens who had requested evacuation. The non-combatants were caught in the middle of a power struggle between fighting factions, and could lose their lives if



Staff Sgt. Phil A. Mehringer

they stayed.

Establishing an evacuation control center to expedite the process of moving the non-combatants was the mission of MEU Service Support Group-22. Two CH-46E helicopters from Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron-261 lifted the ECC team over the mountainous terrain, landing near an abandoned farmhouse where they met people in



22nd MEU(SOC) Marines dangle beneath a helicopter after an extraction.

need of assistance. The evacuees were searched, registered, and temporarily moved to the *USS Ponce* to avoid any immediate danger.

"We had a company of Spanish Marines and a Spanish reconnaissance platoon attached to us during the exercise," said Maj. David Fuquea, executive officer of BLT 1/2. "Except for the language barrier, my Marines tell me, they are just like us. The experience, skills, and knowledge both units have are similar."

The flexibility of the 22nd MEU(SOC) was amply displayed in its first exercise during its deployment as the landing force for the U.S. Navy's 6th Fleet. The exercises they conduct prepare them for any real-world contingency operation, such as the Sierra Leone evacuation executed by 22nd MEU(SOC) Marines aboard the *Kearsarge*.

The 22nd MEU(SOC) consolidated in mid-June in the Mediterranean to resume normal operations. □

A GLIMPSE at Tomorrow

Marines looks at a select handful of weapons and programs to give our readers — many of whom will be the first to use them — a look into the future.

By Maj. John Luddy
HQMC, Washington

Summer is defense budget time in Washington, and right now lawmakers are completing their work on the Fiscal Year 1998 Department of Defense Authorization bill. As always, major defense programs — the Marines' MV-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft, the Air Force's F-22 Raptor fighter, the Army's Comanche helicopter, and the Navy's F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet strike fighter— get most of the attention. Behind these headlines, some less glamorous programs are taking shape which will have a daily impact on Marines in the Fleet Marine Force.

Since much of this gear will become operational within a few short years, Marines looks this month at a select

handful of weapons and programs to give our readers — many of whom will be the first to use them — a glimpse into the future.

While official changes to the Corps' warfighting doctrine will undoubtedly accompany each new system, it is not

too soon for individual Marines to begin to think about how they are going to use them.



Precision
Gunnery
Training
System

Precision Gunnery Trainer System

The PGTS is a simulator for two of the Marine Corps' most powerful tank-killers: the Dragon and Tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missile systems. PGTS will be the base for training entry-level operating force gunners at school and deployed training environments, including ships at sea.

The PGTS consists of external



SE



Marines test-fire the Javelin medium anti-armor weapon.

Courtesy TSI/Martin

sensors that register hits, a pulse projector mounted on the 25 mm chain gun, a control panel to view information about shot locations, a computer processor, and a global positioning system. The system can simulate an actual round's trajectory.

To date, 132 PGTS TOW trainers have hit the field, with 48 additional systems on the way. Additionally, the CPUs in 37 older systems will be updated along with the addition of special tools and test equipment to significantly enhance supportability. Delivery of the revamped systems began in July.

Javelin

The Javelin is one of two new systems developed to save the lives of Marine gunners and be tougher on tanks. The lethality of systems like the Dragon and TOW has never been in question, but the fact that these weapons must be hand-guided to the target after leaving a significant signature put Marines' lives in danger.

The Javelin is a soft-launched, fire-and-forget, medium anti-armor system weighing about 49.3 pounds. It has a required range of 2,000 meters, as well as improved lethality and gunner survivability.

The Javelin, a joint Marine and Army project, consists of a reusable command launch unit and a warhead. The launch unit uses an integral thermal day/night sight with four-power Wide Field of View and eight-power Narrow Field of view settings, which can also be used as a stand-alone thermal sight. The missile is housed in a disposable launch tube assembly and consists of a tandem warhead, guidance section, flight motor, and launch motor.

The launch motor gives the Javelin its soft-launch capability, allowing it to be fired from enclosures and bunkers, and a low signature provides gunners with a better chance of firing undetected.

According to the Requirements Division at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, the Javelin will fall into the TOW squad structure in the anti-armor platoon of the weapons company in Marine infantry battalions. Eight two-man Javelin teams will replace TOWs in the battalions. The new weapons are slated for fielding in 1999.

Marines prepare to fire the Lightweight 155 mm howitzer.



Predator

The Predator is a man-portable, fire-and-forget, light anti-tank weapon also slated for anti-armor platoons within weapons companies. Like the Javelin, the Predator's "soft launch" propulsion system is designed to allow gunners to fire from inside bunkers or buildings with greater survivability. Designed to defeat the most advanced tank threat, it is especially user-friendly, and will require very little maintenance beyond normal care and cleaning. It comes ready

formed penetrator that strikes the top of the tank as the missile flies overhead. Current plans call for the Predator to arrive in the fleet around 2000 with training systems designed around the Indoor Simulated Marksmanship System, Multiple Integrated Laser System 2000.

Lightweight howitzer

When future Marines need a bigger punch on the battle field, they will call on the new "King of Battle." The Lightweight 155 mm Howitzer is a joint Marine and Army program to improve the mobility, lethality, and survivability of artillery fire support. The program is currently at the forefront of current acquisition reform efforts by the Marine Corps and Department of the Navy, according to the Marine Corps Systems Command, Quantico, Va.

The LW155 will weigh about 9,000 pounds, compared to the current 16,000-pound M198 Howitzer, making it capable of airlift by the V-22 Osprey. Additionally, the LW155 will emplace, displace, and make large shifts in fire direction in half the time required by the M198, while it sends five to eight rounds per minute down range.

This combination will offer the Marine Air-Ground Task Force commander a much wider range of options in planning how to use his artillery. More

important, it will provide ground combat units engaged with the enemy with a high volume of faster, more accurate fire support.

Currently in the engineering and manufacturing development phase, initial operational capability for the Marine Corps is slated for early in fiscal year 2002.

LAV trainer

Reserve light armored reconnaissance Marines are slated for a training boost this October, with the initial delivery of three light armored vehicle simulators. The Light Armored Vehicle Full-Crew Interactive Simulation Trainers will allow Marines to get a real feel for battle on the move without ever moving. The trainers are monitored by a computer-controlled system outside the vehicle.

Two additional trainers are slated for delivery in December.

Personal Equipment

With better individual equipment, Marines will be more focused on the mission, less fatigued, and better prepared for combat. Just as important, the prospect for improved morale speaks for itself.

The Intermediate



Light Armored Vehicle Full-Crew Interactive Simulation Trainer



Predator light anti-armor weapon.

for use with no field assembly required, and weighs about 20 pounds, making it a far lighter burden to shoulder than the heavy-duty Javelin.

The Predator has a simple cross-hair sight, and may also be fitted with night sights. It can engage targets anywhere from 17 to 600 meters with an inertially-guided missile controlled by dual sensors (optical and magnetic). The missile destroys its target with an explosively

Cold-Wet Boot will protect Marines from the extremes of cold and wet weather, while providing more traction and comfort than cold-weather boots currently in the fleet. The ICW boot is an insulated, lined leather boot with a Vibram lug sole for increased traction in snow and rough terrain. This boot will provide better protection in harsh tactical climatic conditions that fall between the capabilities of the standard-issue infantry combat boot and the extreme cold weather boots, which cannot be worn for extended periods of time.

The new boot will appear in seabags, exchanges, and cash sales in October. Quantities should be widely available by January 1998.

The Corps is currently field testing a replacement for the all-purpose, lightweight, individual carrying equipment pack. If Marines are happy with the **Marine Load Systems** after the test, fleet Marines could see 16,000 MLSs by next year.

The new pack system will incorporate a padded hip belt to replace cartridge belts, that can also be used for the

load-bearing vest and modular pack. The vest will have special pockets for individual weapons, as well as additional pockets for utility gear, shotgun shells, and non-lethal systems. All pockets are removable and can be placed on the pack, vest, or hip belt.

The pack will incorporate a detachable load-bearing frame (internal/external hybrid) to be incorporated into the load-bearing vest. It will consist of a main pack with radio carrier, two detachable sustainment pouches, a detachable patrol pack, and a detachable pack for sleeping gear.

The MLS will also have a drink-on-the-move system with a two-liter water bladder and an NBC-compatible drinking tube.

Current plans have 161,000 systems in the Marine Corps' inventory by fiscal year 2001.

The **Infantry Shelter** will accommodate two Marines with their gear and provide far more protection from cold, wind, and rain than the current shelter half. The infantry shelter weighs less than 8 pounds, and could be on the backs of some Marines by the end of this year.

Night Vision

This year, the Corps should see the latest entrant in the night

vision equipment line, the AN/PVS-14 Monocular Night Vision Device. It provides similar capability to the AN/PVS-7B Night Vision Goggle in a smaller and lighter package. Operational testing last summer proved the device to be dependable, durable, and well accepted by the user community. The purchase of 9,731 units is planned.

In other areas of the night vision program, Generation III MX-11620 25 mm tubes to improve the current AN/PVS-4 & AN/TVS-5 night sights are also scheduled for delivery in the near future. These tubes were purchased last year, with the remaining requirement slated for arrival in fiscal year 1999.

Non-lethal weapons

The Non-Lethal Weapons Capability Sets are specific items of individual equipment and munitions designed for a range of non-lethal capabilities. The items are multi-purpose, inexpensive tools to be employed from existing weapons platforms and give Marines an alternative means of applying force to accomplish the mission. Sets include: a riot face shield, Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) dispensers, a full-length riot shield, an expandable riot baton, a riot baton training suit, a 12-gauge family of non-lethal munitions, a rifleman's combat optic, a high-intensity searchlight, CALTROPs, a 40 mm family of non-lethal munitions, restraining devices, stingball and stun grenades, and inert and training devices for all items listed.

While the first NLW capability sets were delivered to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit earlier this year, additional sets of non-munition items should make their way to operating forces this month. Ammunition and pepper spray should be delivered next spring, as soon as testing and certification are complete.

Along the same lines, the Marine Corps is also looking at potential NLW alternatives to anti-personnel land mines and riot control agents, and non-lethal munitions for light and heavy armored vehicles.

Additionally, between FY99 and FY03, many more non-lethal weapons



should be available for production, including unmanned aerial vehicle/light vehicle NLW dispensing devices, foams, "speed bumps," and dazzling lasers.

The Grizzly

The Combat Breacher Vehicle, or Grizzly, is a full-tracked, heavily protected system that integrates the M1 Main Battle Tank chassis and CBV-unique mission modules. It combines countermine and counter obstacle capabilities into a single, survivable system to create a lane of passage for Marines and combat vehicles. The Grizzly will include a full-width mine clearing blade with automatic depth control, a power-driven extracting arm, and a weapons station. Marines should begin seeing the results of this joint Marine Corps and Army venture in FY04.

Obstacle breacher

The Anti-personnel Obstacle Breaching System is a portable, two-man system employed in combat to breach footpaths through wire obstacles and antipersonnel landmines. Weighing 130 pounds, APOBS can be employed in two minutes to breach a six-meter by 45-meter path, while providing a 25-meter safe standoff distance for the breaching team. APOBS will replace the M1A2 Bangalore Torpedo Demolition Kit.

When a minefield or wire obstacle is encountered, a two-man breaching team will place the APOBS in the firing position and activate the rocket motor. A delay in the rocket ignition allows the breaching team to take cover. The rocket accelerates rapidly and pulls the fuse and line charge (a string of grenades) behind it. The fuse is activated by the force exerted by the rocket motor. A delay detonator inside the fuse allows the line charge to be deployed over the obstacle before detonation.

Initial operating capability is expected in March 2000.

Breaching the shore

Units that pave the way for amphibious landings may have a much wider road to travel courtesy of a new mine-clearing weapon that can be fired from



The "Grizzly" Combat Breacher Vehicle

the sea.

The weapon is comprised of two parts: Distributed Explosive Technology and Shallow Water Assault Breaching.

In an integrated approach, the DET and the SABRE systems will be launched from an air-cushioned landing craft to neutralize mines in the shallow surf zone from zero to 10 feet. Multiple units of each type will be deployed as the first strike in an amphibious operation. The LCAC was selected as the delivery platform due to its high speed, over-the-horizon capability, large cargo deck area, and payload.

SABRE is a line charge munition propelled by a rocket motor. One hundred thirty 10-pound explosive charges are connected along a 400-foot nylon harness assembly. The charges are initiated by a fire and forget fuse and are optimized to neutralize anti-invasion and

tank mines and light to medium obstacles. Marine combat engineers will operate the launch controller to fire the rocket motor that deploys the SABRE from its container. The SABRE clears a path about 30 percent wider than the current M58 Linear Demolition Charge.

The DET is a dual rocket-launched explosive array. Two DETs will sit side-by-side on the foredeck of the LCAC. Combat engineers will use the same launch controller as used for the SABRE to initiate the rocket motors to deploy the DETs. The explosive array is a matrix of 180 lines of detonating cord, spaced one foot apart, carried in a kevlar exoskeleton and is initiated by a fire and forget fuse. The array neutralizes more than 90 percent of all mines available for testing.

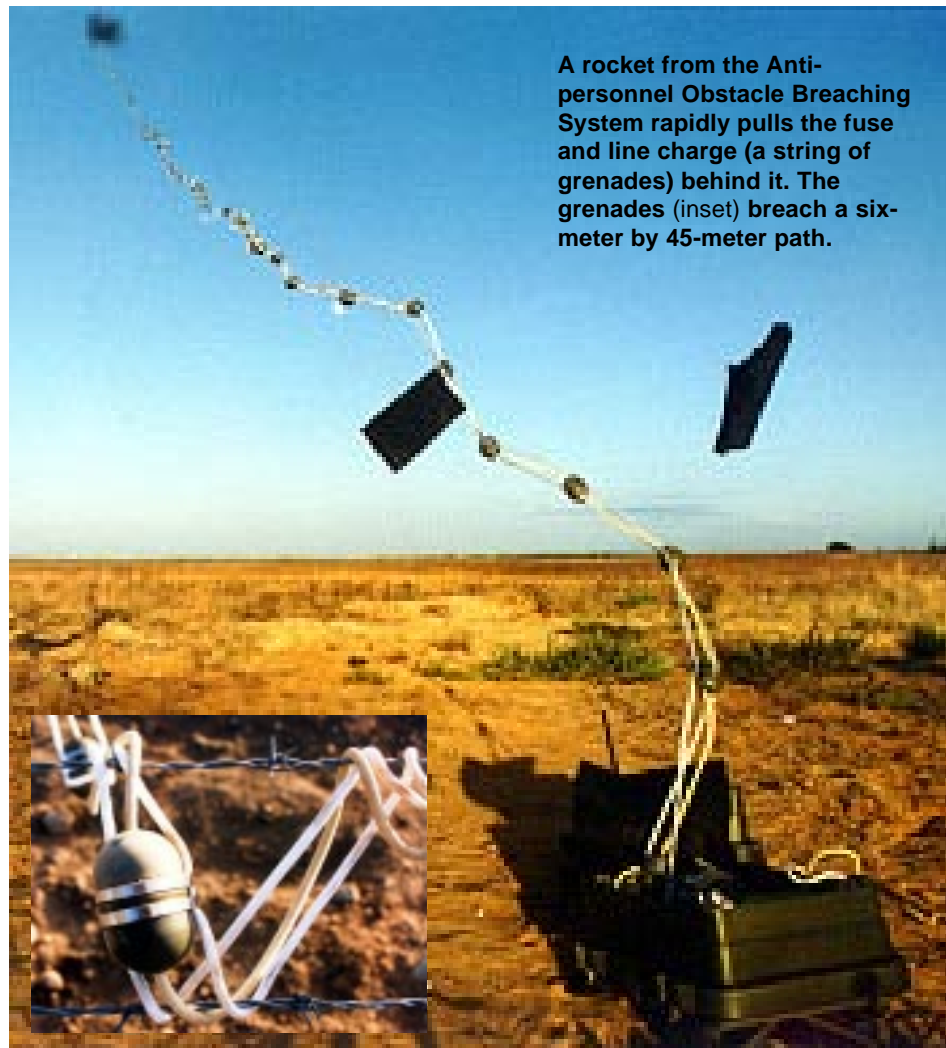
Procurement for the Navy and Marine Corps team is expected in fiscal year 1999.



Tactical vehicles

The well-known "five-ton" medium cargo truck is the workhorse of the Marine Corps' tactical vehicle fleet. The classic five-ton originated in the 1950s, and the current M809 and M939 series vehicles were fielded in the 1980s. As these vehicles approach the end of their service life, the Corps has explored options for replacing them, while at the same time adapting to changing performance and capability standards.

The Corps' current emphasis on maneuver requires a vehicle with greater cargo capacity, faster cross-country speed, and the ability to accompany the Humvee across different types of challenging terrain. Engineering studies have concluded that the most cost-effective option is to use the current five-ton's frame, cab, and cargo bed as the foundation for a remanufactured truck.



A rocket from the Anti-personnel Obstacle Breaching System rapidly pulls the fuse and line charge (a string of grenades) behind it. The grenades (inset) breach a six-meter by 45-meter path.

Building on these elements, new technology like an anti-lock brake system, central tire inflation system, independent suspension, and a new electronically-tuned engine will essentially produce a new vehicle capable of supporting Marines well into the future. More than 8,000 trucks will be refurbished, and the whole fleet should be replaced by 2005.

Linked to the Corps

MarineLINK, the Corps' official website (www.usmc.mil), is expanding to suit the information needs of Marines and the extended Marine family, and will prove a valuable tool for Marines today and in the future.

Soon, users will navigate through the site using third-generation web design and java scripts to help users find what they are looking for, fast. Marines can also use this information "hub" as their link to the growing list of installa-

tions and activities with websites.

These links include recent additions like the Marine Corps Institute's website (www.mci.hqi.usmc.mil), which will soon offer information on distant learning services accessible in about 20 seconds.

Other new items will include HQMC staff agencies, selection board results, images, screen savers and a family section devoted to family and friend resources. Users can already read *Marines* magazine online, and can soon have the Corps' worldwide newswire service sent to them via e-mail.

Marine expeditionary units are already using websites to report their actions and keep their families informed.

In a turbulent world, demands for the Corps' to respond rapidly with its unique range of capabilities are only going to increase. These improvements suggest that 21st-century Marines will not only move faster from ship to shore, but will operate more effectively and safely when they arrive.



Molding Future NCOs

Some would say, "What else could you possibly teach to these Marines?" One visit to the Sergeants Course at Twentynine Palms, Calif., will give you the answer.

By Sgt. Maxx Godsey
12th MCD, San Diego

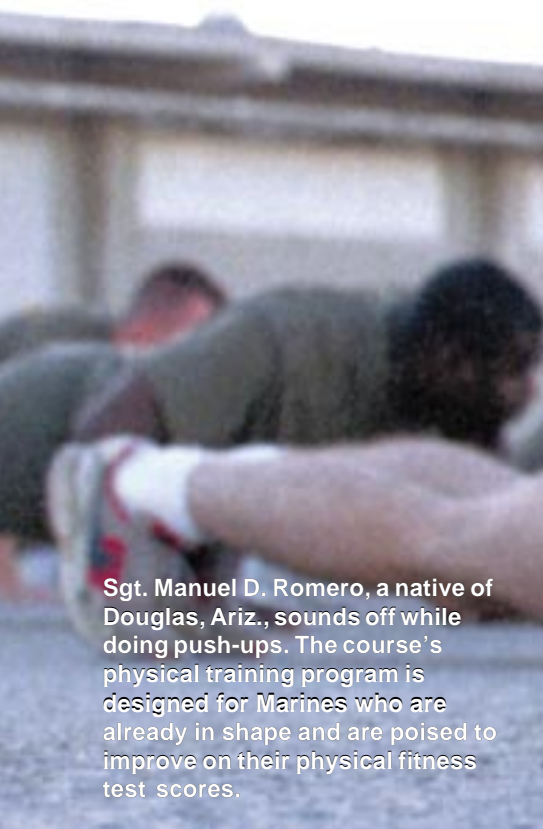
Ninety-eight Marine sergeants, members of Sergeants Course Class 5-97, fall into early morning formation, savoring the cool Mojave Desert air. Their service "A" uniforms provide tell-tale signs of the duties, experience, and responsibilities of

today's Marine NCO. The proof is mounted in perfect rows of ribbons above their left breast pockets. Look closely and you'll see military awards ranging from the Navy Commendation Medal, to the Combat Action and Humanitarian Service ribbon (some with multiple awards).

Some would ask, "What else could you possibly teach to such Marines?"

Visit the Combat Center's Sergeants Course and you'll find out. Since its activation Oct. 1, 1992, it has come to be regarded by many as essential to a Marine's successful career.

"When a young sergeant comes here wanting to do well in the Corps, a better NCO and Marine is going to leave this course," said Sgt. Maj. Robert J. Calamari, course director. "A review of

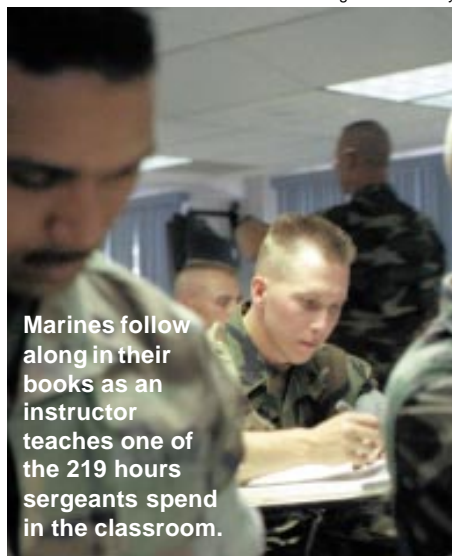


Sgt. Manuel D. Romero, a native of Douglas, Ariz., sounds off while doing push-ups. The course's physical training program is designed for Marines who are already in shape and are poised to improve on their physical fitness test scores.

Sgt. Maxx Godsey

the records of Marines considered by last year's staff sergeant selection board showed that every single sergeant who attended this course moved to the right on their fitness reports. (A reporting senior's rating options, from left to right, on a fitness report are unsatisfactory, below average, average, above average, excellent, and outstanding.)

"What we do here is mold our NCOs

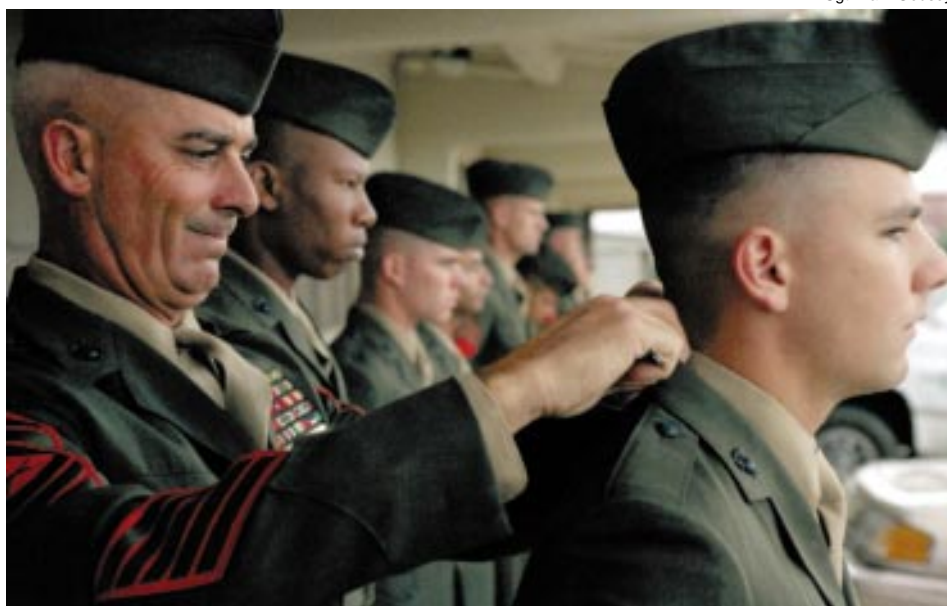


into the leaders of the future. This course is really the first formal stepping stone in a Marine's professional military education," said Calamari.

"Most sergeants find the course challenging. When they successfully complete it, they not only have a solid PME foundation, but they have improved their self confidence," said chief instructor Gunnery Sgt. Daniel A. Huff.

"Naturally, these Marines are very involved in doing well in their occupational specialties, sometimes to the extent that they tend to get a little rusty on the basic things that all Marines are responsible for. We take them out of their respective comfort zones, and make them work with their peers. Being required to perform as general Marines for other sergeants is a big challenge,"

Sgt. Maxx Godsey



said Huff.

Many of the hurdles to clear in the Sergeant's Course take place in the classroom. Testable lecture topics include military customs and courtesies, philosophy of leadership, patrolling, and weapons instruction, to name a few. In all, more than 219 hours are devoted to both refresh the students' memories on military subjects, and teach them how to take that knowledge back into the Corps.

"Now I'll be able to give classes when I get back to my unit," said Sgt. Lisa S. Leighton, an administrative clerk at the Inspector/Instructor Staff office in her native Tuscon, Ariz. "I used to be kind of quiet when it came to general Marine Corps knowledge, but now I can go back with some real answers."

Sergeants are graded not only on their ability to retain knowledge but also on how well they are able to apply it among their peers. They spend approximately 35 hours drilling members of their squad, conducting uniform inspections, overseeing guided discussions, and teaching military subjects. For many sergeants, it is the first time they have had the opportunity to practice the leadership qualities inherent to the rank they have earned.

"Drilling in the Corporals Course was not nearly as involved as here," said Sgt. J. Mitchell Boyle, a fire direction controller at Romeo Battery, 5th Battalion, 11th Marines, Camp Pendleton, Calif. "With the sword manual training and the knowledge of the squad advisors, I feel even more confident about drilling — even formal ceremonies," said the Wanaque, N.J., native.

The course's physical training program is designed for Marines who are already in shape and poised to improve on their physical fitness test scores. During their total of 21 hours of physical training, the sergeants run in ability group squads, tackle the combat conditioning and obstacle courses, push themselves during interval training, and roam the desert terrain during full-pack forced marches.

"I couldn't believe how much I improved my run time," said Sgt. Jesse

Master Sgt. Mark Carrington, senior staff NCO in charge, inspects Sgt. Eric M. Steffens, a native of Monroe, Mich.



Marines pay their fines during the course's Mess Night.

Sgt. Maxx Godsey



Sgt. Carolyn Neal disassembles the M203 grenade launcher during the course's weapons evaluation.

L. Bier, an ordnance mechanic at 1st Maintenance Bn., 1st Force Service Support Group, Camp Pendleton, Calif. "I also learned how to conduct a proper Semper Fit 2000 PT session, so I can go back to my Marines and get them in even better shape," said the Howe, Idaho native.

Despite the wealth of training imparted by the instructors, some of the students' greatest rewards come from their own self-generated esprit de corps. Course-required events like mess night only accentuate the camaraderie that keeps the sergeants up late into the night in their squad bays, sharing stories of their challenging and rewarding experiences during their careers.

"At first, being around nothing but sergeants was a little intimidating," said Sgt. Ricky J. Spencer, an amphibious assault vehicle crew chief at Delta Co., 3rd Amphibious Assault Bn., MCAGCC. "Once we realized we were all in this course together, it was a great way to

learn how other sergeants work. It allowed me to find out a lot about how people in the rest of the Corps live," said the Fritch, Texas, native.

The teamwork and camaraderie of the last five weeks culminated in graduation day for Class 5-97. The Marines assembled at the base theater had passed a course few devil dogs ever have the privilege to attend. For many, the Sergeants Course is more than professional military education that can help them be more competitive for promotion to staff noncommissioned officer. It is a sharing of cultures, intellect, and motivation; a sometimes rigorous but ultimately uplifting experience that instills a deep pride in one's self and the Corps.

One by one, the graduating Marine sergeants marched to the stage and accepted their diplomas. They had received their education for the future. Their mission now is to pass it on to the next generation of Marines. □

Career Tips for Military Spouses

How to achieve success amidst a stressful and challenging life.

By Linda D. Kozaryn
Washington

Maintaining a balance between personal career goals and family life is challenging in any environment. Marriage to a Marine can multiply those challenges: unpredictable schedules, frequent moves, unexpected separations, and deployments contribute to a more stressful and complicated life.

Every day, Family Member Employment Assistance Program specialists at 19 Career Resource Management Centers around the Corps work with men and women helping them identify and pursue their personal employment objectives. They understand how a Marine's military career might impact their spouse's aspirations. They can help find options that are compatible with the military lifestyle.

To assist spouses in finding success in their careers, FMEAP counselors offer the following Top 10 List

of Career Tips:

1. Be curious. Ask questions. Talk to people you meet about their work, how they found their jobs, the disadvantages and drawbacks they see in their fields.

2. Have a plan. Know what you want, right now and in the future. Work out your preferences, explore your options as you develop your Individual Career Plan. Focus on what you need to do to reach your goals, such as more education, training, or related work experience.

3. Remain flexible. Even though you know where you're going and how you'll get there, be ready to change direction if a unique opportunity comes along. Military life offers lots of wonderful possibilities if we are willing to "bloom where we're planted."

4. Hit the ground running when you move. Begin your job search before you relocate. Carry a resume on disc, work samples, letters of recommendation, and a great looking interview outfit in case something comes up.

5. Network. Most people find their jobs through informal contacts. Prepare a short "commercial" about your goals and then involve everyone you know in your job search. Ask family, friends, neighbors, or professionals for referrals of people who can tell you about job openings.

6. Keep current. Know what skills are in demand and whether you are competitive. Keep credentials current. Be ready to cite your typing speed or computer program knowledge.

7. Toss the tunnel vision. Consider jobs you've never done. Look outside your comfort

zone for jobs to help you stretch.

Identify transferable skills and practice describing them to an employer.

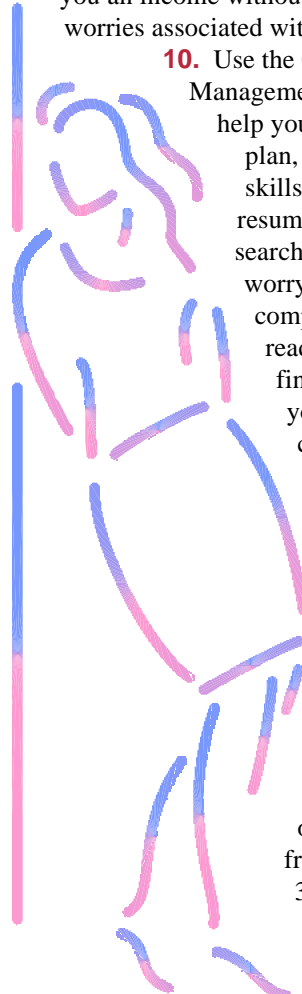
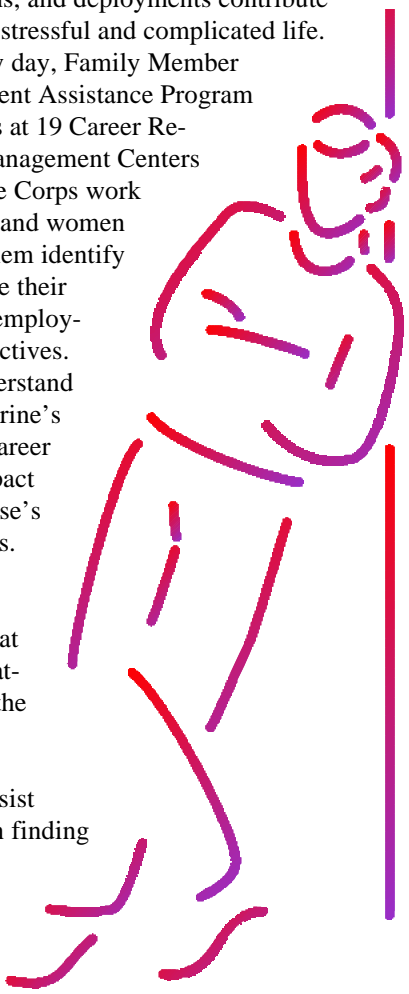
8. Consider alternative work arrangements. Ever thought about job sharing, part-time work, volunteering, bartering your services, or telecommuting?

Accepting, or proposing, these options can help you make contacts, keep skills current, develop work experience or find work when jobs are scarce.

9. Consider a home-based business. Doing things like word processing, transcription, or child care at home earns you an income without the expenses or worries associated with an outside job.

10. Use the Career Resource Management Center. We'll help you develop a career plan, identify your skills, write a great resume, focus your job search, and reduce the worry about how you'll compete. When you're ready, we'll help you find ways to pursue your plans with confidence.

To get in touch with the Family Member Employment Assistance Program nearest you, call your local Marine Corps Family Service Center or call one of the center's toll-free numbers: 800-336-4663 (East Coast) or 800-253-1624 (West Coast). □



The Good Shepherds

How a desire to help Virginia's kids succeed in school has transformed into an unbreakable bond between youngsters and Marines.

By **Sgt. Shanze Lee**
MCB Quantico, Va.

When Vickye Jones, an elementary school teacher, came up with the idea to start a mentor program at Featherstone Elementary School six years ago, she had one Marine volunteer.

Although she didn't originally create the "Choices" Mentor Program at the Woodbridge, Va., school with the Marines specifically in mind, they have since overwhelmed the program with their participation. On a yearly average, 16 to 20 Marines volunteer to spend an hour of their work week with these children.

Following in the successful footsteps of Featherstone, teachers and coordinators at nearby Triangle Elementary School have created a mentor program that, again, has been overwhelmed with Marine support.

The word seems to be spreading because schools throughout northern Virginia area have been requesting that

Marines volunteer as mentors at their schools.

The mentor programs select students, affectionately referred to as "mentees," of diverse backgrounds who might have scholastic challenges to overcome, attention or attitude problems, or difficulties at home.

According to Flossie Petruzzi, a counselor at

Featherstone, an hour a week makes a world of difference in these children's lives.

Most of the students in the programs are between ages 9 and 11 years old. Like most children that age, they are very impressionable and susceptible to bad and good influences. The mentees get a one-on-one friend, said Petruzzi.

These programs are designed so that the mentor and mentee can spend an hour a week doing whatever the student wants — as

long as it's productive. This could entail help with reading or writing, experiencing something new — like exploring the Internet — or spending time on the basketball court talking about life.

"I think a mentor is supposed to



Triangle Elementary student, Brittany Kile, 11, and her mentor, Cpl. Aixa Dones, have built a sisterly bond since they were paired in the program.

Sgt. Shanze Lee



Maj. Jeff Brown assists Omar Paita, 11, with those frustrating fractions. "That's what I wanted a mentor for — to help me with math," said the Featherstone Elementary student.

make you feel better," said Kyle Shanefelt, 10. He said most of the time his mentor, Maj. Robert Head, accomplishes the mission — making him feel better.

This fifth grader was one of the quiet ones in the back of the classroom — so quiet that he was considered an "extreme introvert." This is someone who is more interested in their own mental life than the world around them.

"He never talked at first," said Head. "Now, he talks my ear off."

The Marines who participate in the programs range from privates to colonels. Whether the insignia on their collars are shiny or flat black, the commitment is the same — one hour of their time.

When the Marines arrive each week, the whole school gets excited — not just the students but the teachers, too, said Jones. "The kids wait by the door for



**“Not only do they
protect our country,
they protect our
future by keeping
watch over our flock
— our children.”**

Kim Wood

Mentor program coordinator
Triangle Elementary School

their Marine.”

Usually dressed in their service “C” uniforms, the mentors paint the hallways with their Marine green and khaki presence. “I think it definitely makes a difference to the children that it’s a Marine who is their mentor,” said Petruzzi. “I think the uniform signifies success and being on the right track.

“That’s what we want,” said Petruzzi, “to encourage the kids to become successful and stay positive.”

The benefits aren’t all one-sided, however. Some of the mentors are able to grow personally from the experience as well.

For Cpl. Aixa Dones, having Brittany Kile, 11, as a mentee is like having a little sister for the first time. Since Kile doesn’t have any sisters either, their bond has grown into something much more than schoolwork help.

Kile said she hated school before she was put into the program. Her problems stemmed from reading and spelling.

“I used to get frustrated,” said the fourth-grade girl. “I would start crying and hollering when the teacher would say ‘you know what that word is’ and I didn’t.”

Now, Kile said, she doesn’t get frustrated when she reads because Dones has helped her work through some of the obstacles of reading and spelling. She added that, the word “escape” still gives her a headache when she can’t remember how to spell it.

The number of success stories are innumerable, said Jones. Each student gets help in different ways. Shanefelt has been able to open up to his mentor, and Kile enjoys coming to school after overcoming some of her reading difficulties.

But, one particular story stands out in Jones’ memory. Two brothers, who lost their father to heart failure several years ago, were placed with a Marine in the mentor program.

Eventually, the older brother, 11, talked to the mentor about his father, as did the younger brother. Up to that point, the teachers and counselors were concerned because the two boys would not talk about their loss.

“It was a sigh of relief for all of us,” said Jones.

Not all of the success stories are as dramatic as this one, but only good can come from a person spending a little time to listen and talk with these children each week.

“I am asked often how well I think the program is working,” said Kim Wood, the mentor program coordinator at Triangle, as she recalled a story. Recently, one of the students came running up to her with his very own set of dog tags that his mentor had given him.

“His name, Greg Shepherd, was inscribed on the front and “The good shepherd” was inscribed on the back,” she said. “Greg wears his dog tags every day and looks up to his mentor with awe and pride.

“I truly believe that our mentors are our good shepherds. Not only do they protect our country, they protect our future by keeping watch over our flock — our children.” □

Going to

EXT

From its monthly magazines, to cultural exchanges, to its own line of scuba gear and clothing, MWR is going all out to ensure Marine families get the most out of life on Okinawa.

Jet skiing at Oura Wan Beach, Camp Schwab, Okinawa, Japan, is only one of many recreational and leisure activities for Marines and their families on Okinawa.

xtremes

By Douglas J. Gilbert
Camp Foster, Okinawa, Japan

The Marines are looking for more than a few good men, women, and children. Volunteers must be able to jump, run, swim, dive, bowl, golf, and play ball. They must also be interested in learning more about their Okinawan hosts' history and customs.

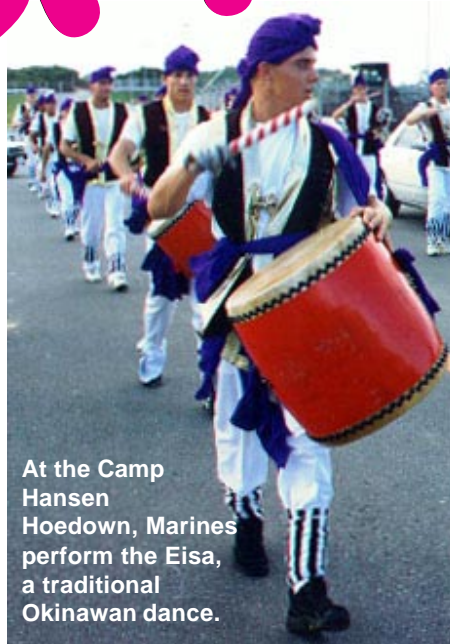
Along with their Air Force and Navy counterparts, Marine Morale, Welfare, and Recreation provides dozens of off-duty programs for some 60,000 Americans living on Okinawa. Each service has viable programs, but the Marines have gone to extra lengths to establish a recreation beachhead on the island.

From publicizing activities in a slick monthly magazine called *For Immediate Release*, to promoting its Tsunami Gear line of scuba gear and clothing, Marine MWR sends service families a clear message: "If you don't have anything to do, it's not for a lack of effort on our part."

"We tell people living on base



Youth programs range from baseball to ballet and martial arts.



At the Camp Hansen Hoedown, Marines perform the Eisa, a traditional Okinawan dance.

what's available off base and people living on the economy what they'll find to do on base," said Ben Erichsen, MWR chief of marketing. "Then we provide them things to do."

Adult and family programs range from camping trips and tours, cookouts and wine tastings, to ballet lessons and running. A huge, modern fieldhouse hosts events ranging from basketball to food fairs. Beach programs include volleyball, jet skiing, and one of the most popular recreational activities on the island — scuba diving.

"Okinawa provides some of the best diving in the world, in coves and lagoons right off its shore," Erichsen said. "All the reefs here are alive; the range of coral and fish is amazing."

"Our goal is to make this sport accessible to every service member and family member assigned here, no matter what branch of service they represent."

Besides their chain of six Tsunami Gear stores at Foster and other Marine

Corps installations on the island, Marine MWR publishes *Okinawa Diver*. The monthly magazine is packed with articles, photographs and maps, and information on courses for all levels of diving proficiency. In 1996, more than 3,000 students completed Marine MWR diving courses, Erichsen said.

Not all offerings are recreational, however. Some are designed to strengthen U.S.-Okinawan relationships. The Marines host annual friendship festivals, for example, that draw thousands of visitors from across the island. Marine MWR employee Makiko Shimanaka writes articles in *For Immediate Release* that educate Americans about Okinawa. She also writes articles for the largest daily Japanese newspaper on the island to better inform Okinawans of their American guests.

"Our cultural activities and Makiko's articles help build a bridge between our two cultures," Erichsen said. "But more importantly, they reveal how well Americans and Okinawans get along."

"Okinawa is a good place to live and work," added Erichsen, who came to the island for the first time last year. "And for an overseas assignment, you simply can't beat the quality and quantity of facilities and programs all the services provide." □



Subtropical temperatures make outdoor activities available year-round.

Around the Corps

California

MARINE CORPS BASE, Camp Pendleton — The cool evening air drifts across his face as he holds the round's tip, keeping it from falling into the mouth of the 81 mm tube. The smell of burnt powder filters across the gunline and the sweat beads on his forehead just below the helmet's leather band.

In slow motion, the instructor draws a deep breath. The student watches intently as his lips form the word 'fire.' Through instinct, the student releases the round and leans away. Before he can stop moving, the tube emits a loud pop, followed by the ring of steel.

The finned round is free of the tube and arcs high into the air. Seconds later, it impacts on the far side of the ravine.

Though it is too far to see, the round's explosion sent hundreds of pieces of shrapnel and rock into the surrounding area, with the capability of killing or incapacitating a target within 35 meters.

The student is a new Marine going through Infantry Training Battalion's Weapon's Package for mortarmen. Up until training day 15, all Marines in the infantry field train as a single body. But after that, they split into their own specialties. The 81 mm and 60 mm mortar systems are the most technical weapon systems to use in the infantry field, according to course instructor Sgt. Scott Stringfellow.

The 81 mm mortar is affectionately referred to as a "reach out and touch someone" weapon in the infantry field. It has a maximum range of 3.4 miles and can send its rounds in an arc as high as 1.8 miles. The mortar is known as an indirect fire weapon, which means the target does not have to be visible to be hit.

Throughout the course, students are taught to enter a position and lay their guns on-line by either compass or using an aiming circle. They are later shown how to register the gunline where each tube fires a single round, one after another, from right to left, to determine their exact position.

The course provides the students with the basic knowledge and terminology for mortar gunnery, Cpl. Khamkhaune Kamalikhram, an instructor for the course said. The students will learn more detailed methods of employment for the weapon systems when they report to their permanent duty station. —*Camp Pendleton public affairs*

MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER, Twentynine Palms

— Marines from several units aboard the combat center aided the Bureau of Land Management in the clean-up of an illegal dump site in May.

Led by Val Prehoda, an environmental protection specialist at the Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Directorate, the group used a loader to scoop up buckets of litter, packed it into dump trucks, and shipped it to the Combat Center landfill, the nearest site for waste disposal.

"This is a community effort, Prehoda said. "Wonder Valley Fire Department and personnel from the National Park Service have been out here previously cleaning up, and now it's our turn to help out."

Russell Scofield, Yucca Valley resident ranger for BLM, contacted Prehoda and asked if the Combat Center would be interested in helping clean-up the site, which is also a popular recreational shooting range.


The Marines arrived early that morning to begin bagging and moving the illegally-dumped garbage and were later joined by BLM personnel from Barstow, Calif. Between them, the two groups were able to remove about 13 tons of waste, adding to the 50 tons removed in previous clean-ups. The effort also produced 2,600 pounds of scrap metal to be disposed of by the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office. —*Cpl. Jay Lamborn*

District of Columbia

HEADQUARTERS, U.S. MARINE CORPS, Washington

— Gunnery Sgt. Lisa Roe has seen a lot of the Marine Corps. Currently an enlisted career counselor in the Manpower Management and Enlisted Assignment Branch, HQMC, she's also held assignments in Japan and California, served on the drill field at Parris Island, S.C., and rigged chutes at Andrews Air Force Base. She was her platoon's recruit honor graduate and has been meritoriously promoted three times during her career. Still, her wealth of experience didn't prepare her for what she found when she checked into her billet as a company gunnery sergeant at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md.

"I never really understood what the Academy was all about. I knew it was a college, I knew it was a military organiza-



CALIFORNIA. An 81 mm mortar is dropped into its launch tube. New Marines at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton are learning to "reach out and touch someone."



tion, but I didn't understand the whole picture," she said.

Roe, a native of Olympia, Wash., holds the distinction of being the first female enlisted Marine stationed at the Naval Academy. She was among the initial group of enlisted Marines in October 1994 who were assigned to a new program at the Academy. Navy officials had determined that midshipmen need to develop confidence in their staff NCOs and chiefs earlier in their careers. Assigning enlisted Marines and Sailors to the Academy would not only illustrate their role in the sea services, but would also provide midshipmen with mentors who could assist them with their questions and concerns.

When Roe learned of the program she completed an extensive application package documenting the required drill field experience, letters of recommendation, a strong PFT score, and an overall record of solid achievement and experience in the Corps.



**D.C. Gunnery
Sgt. Lisa Roe**

Notified of her selection as the first woman to participate in the program, she began preparing for her new duty station, thinking that it was going to be similar to Parris Island. Instead, she found a "leadership laboratory," where she was a key instructor. "I had to find a way to teach them how to lead without leading for them," she said.

Roe's daily duties began with early morning PT with the midshipmen. From there, she would often spend time critiquing formations and drill. When she wasn't in the classroom co-teaching a leadership class with her company officer, she was walking the barracks, inspecting company areas or talking with students. She said that her tour of duty was free-form, allowing plenty of room for personal initiative.

Roe's positive impact on the midshipmen and her accomplishments earned her a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal. Presented by Lt. Gen. Carol A. Mutter in a HQMC ceremony, the citation reads, "Her presence, ability to relate to midshipmen, and personal example were instrumental in the daily professional development of over 130 midshipmen assigned to her company ... Her direct role in counseling midshipmen who were service-assigned to the Marine Corps has resulted

Around the Corps

in the Naval Academy producing superior future Marine Corps leaders.”

“I wasn’t there as a recruiter,” Roe said, “but I certainly wanted exceptional midshipmen to think about going Marine.”
—2nd Lt. Courtney Wyckoff

Cuba

GUANTANAMO BAY — Corporals Michael Rasmussen and Jessica Diaz will remember their Caribbean assignment for many reasons; among them, their unlikely simultaneous promotion to corporal in May.

Rasmussen, a special intelligence communicator, and Diaz, a cryptologic linguist, are husband and wife and are stationed at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. The chances of being promoted as a couple on the same day were very slim: each MOS had a different cutting score with different time-in-service and time-in-grade requirements, and both Marines had different composite scores.

“When word of the new scores spread through the company, my fellow Marines joked that we would probably get promoted together, and sure enough it happened,” said Rasmussen.

The couple met at the Defense Language Institute, Monterey, Calif. Diaz arrived at Guantanamo Bay several months ahead of her husband and made all the household preparations. Now that they’re together, it’s a case of Marine teamwork in action.

“Each of us has our own strengths and weaknesses, but fortunately my weaknesses are his strengths and we meld well together,” said Diaz. “We form a formidable Marine team,” she said. —
Gunnery Sgt. R.C. Smith

Japan

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Marines were crowned as best overall in the men’s and women’s divisions at the 3rd annual Far Eastern Interservice Bodybuilding Contest June 7 at the Butler Theater. Maj. Carlen Charleston took the men’s title and Capt. Colleen Vigil won the women’s title.

Charleston, winner of his second consecutive interservice championship, joined the Corps in June, 1985 and is from Prairie View, Texas. He said putting on more muscle allowed him to overcome other competitors to win his second title.

“I was more consistent with my workouts since the last interservice competition, so I put on some size,” Charleston said. “I worked hard for it this year and hit the stage with all the intensity I could muster.”

Vigil joined the Corps in March, 1982. The interservice competition was her first bodybuilding contest.

“My work and family members gave

“The judges are looking for the total package,” said 1997 Ironman light heavyweight second place finisher and judge, Master Sgt. James Parker. “We want symmetry, which means all muscle groups must be balanced.”

Parker also said presentation was important. “Bodybuilders can have the biggest, most symmetrical muscles in the world, but if they can’t present them, they’re

Petty Officer 1st Class Gregory L. Davis



SOUTH CAROLINA. A cargo container is moved into position for strapdown on the top deck of *USNS Gordon*.

me a lot of support by giving me time to exercise,” Vigil said. “Once I had the time, I dedicated myself to hard workouts.”

Vigil spent five days every week in the gym. Vigil was a runner before she began bodybuilding. She said bodybuilding and running now complement each other, and her running was key in getting in shape for the Far Eastern contest.

There were 19 servicemembers and DoD civilians who entered the contest, each having the opportunity to show the results of their dieting, running, and weight lifting. An appreciative crowd filled the theater cheering as if they were watching their favorite team in the NBA finals.

Five individuals with fitness and bodybuilding competition experience presided as judges over the competition.

going to lose to someone who can.”
—Cpl. Eric Sirmans

South Carolina

NAVAL WEAPONS STATION, Charleston -- *USNS Gordon* recently set off on its maiden operational voyage. *Gordon* is a former commercial container vessel that recently underwent conversion to Military Sealift Command specifications to make it ideal for the loading, transport and unloading of Marine Corps and Army combat equipment.

Assigned to the Military Sealift Command, *USNS Gordon* is the first United States Navy high-speed roll-on/roll-off (RORO) cargo vessel. —Petty Officer 1st Class Gregory L. Davis